

Disappointed That Key Provision of House Bill Were Stripped out in Senate

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today released the following statement after voting for the final version of a bill that extends unemployment benefits for millions of Americans who have earned them. A handful of senators had blocked the legislation for more than seven weeks, causing 2.5 million American families to lose unemployment insurance benefits. Ultimately, the Senate passed a stripped down version of a larger House package, which Hinchey today voted to pass as the last step in the congressional process.

"Today, 173,000 New Yorkers who had lost their unemployment benefits since the end of May can breathe a sigh of relief . After seven weeks of delay, the congress has finally acted to extend unemployment insurance for 2.5 million American families. For every dollar spent, these benefits generate \$1.61 in economic activity, boosting the American economy while providing a lifeline for unemployed men and women throughout the country. They allow New Yorkers who have lost their income to put food on the table and make ends meet as they look for new work.

"While I am pleased that these benefits will now move forward, I am disappointed in the Senate's decision to strip out essential provisions of the bill I voted to pass in the House that would assist struggling state governments with increased Medicaid needs and allow laid-off workers to continue purchasing health insurance through federal COBRA benefits. These types of investments spur economic activity in the same way that unemployment benefits do and would have provided state governments with the support they need to make it through a tough budget year without additional layoffs. I am going to continue fighting to extend these additional benefits, and I am committed to ensuring that Congress take additional steps to create jobs and improve the overall economy."